

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 are pending in the present Application. Claim 1 has been amended. Support for amended Claim 1 can be found at, for example, the paragraph bridging pages 2 and 3 and Figs. 1-3. No new matter has been added. Entry of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Response to Claim Rejection Under § 112

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite. Specifically, it is indicated that the phrase “ the side of a negative-pressure generating source” of lines 17-18 have insufficient antecedent basis.

While not admitting that this rejection is appropriate, Claim 1 has been amended to recite” a side of a negative-pressure generating source”. Accordingly, Applicant’s submit that the claims now more clearly comply with the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph, and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Response to Claim Rejections Under §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,666,904 to Grindal.

Additionally, Claim 4 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Grindal in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,427,624 to Briggs.

Applicants respectful traverse both rejections.

Grindal discloses a teat cup for cows which is used in such a way that the end of the teat cup is fixedly attached to the base of a cow’s teat by causing the teat cup to suction the teat. Thus, the teat cup is prevented from coming off the teat. In other words, the teat cup of Grindal provides continuous suction. Further, the teat cup of Grindal, as shown in FIG. 1, is a structure in which a connection 27 is connected to a pulsator to generate pulses within the space 29 so that

the milking operation is carried out. Accordingly, the teat cup of Grindal has a double-walled structure.

In contrast, the teat cup of the present invention is a teat cup for laboratory animals. In periods other than the suction period and milking period, the pressure inside the teat cup is returned back to atmospheric pressure. Further, the teat cup of the present invention has a single-walled structure.

When used for milking, the teat cup of the present invention is fixedly attached to one teat with hands or a teat-cup attaching stand. In some cases, laboratory animals have to be milked intermittently everyday, every two or three days or more. However, mastitis with a congested or bleeding mammary gland could result if a teat is continuously stimulated by suction, and laboratory animals having mastitis cannot be milked. Thus, unlike the case of teat cups for cows, teat cups for laboratory animals cannot have a structure in which a teat is always kept suctioned into the teat cup for milking.

Furthermore, the internal structures of the two teat cups differ from each other. As discussed above, the milking of cows is carried out by causing a teat cup, having a double-walled structure, to suction the base of a cow's teat and applying negative pressure thereto. Further, the second conical portion (21) in Grindal is conical in shape and gradually becomes narrower.

In contrast, when it comes to the milking operation of laboratory animals, one cannot fixedly attach a teat cup to the base of an animal's teat by causing the teat cup to suction to the teat for the reasons discussed above. Thus, the teat cup for laboratory animals of the present invention has a structure in which the teat holding portion 74 is directly connected to a negative-pressure generating source.

In addition, the first conical portion is funnel shaped wherein the diameter decreased; the second conical portion has a cylinder shape wherein the diameter of the walls of is constant; the third conical portion has a funnel-like shape wherein the diameter decreases from the second conical portion to the teat holding portion; and the teat holding portion is cylindrical in shape wherein the diameter is consistent throughout.

Briggs fails to make up for the deficiencies of Grindal. Thus, Grindal and Briggs fail to anticipate or render obvious the present claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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